

## Social Security Program

The Social Security program—Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI)—provides monthly benefits to workers and their families when earnings stop or are reduced because the worker retires, dies, or becomes disabled. The amount of the worker's retirement insurance (old-age) or disability benefit is based on the worker's level of earnings in employment or self-employment covered by the Social Security program. The benefit amount for an auxiliary or survivor beneficiary is based on a percentage of the worker's benefit. Monthly benefits are payable to retired workers at age 65 (reduced benefits at 62) or to disabled workers at any age. Auxiliary and survivor beneficiaries must generally meet an age, a disability, or child care requirement.

Nationally, in December 2001 benefits were paid to 45,874,040 persons. This number included 28,841,850 retired workers, 5,024,520 widows and widowers, 5,265,190 disabled workers, 2,895,150 wives and husbands, and 3,847,330 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented 15.7 percent of the total population and 91.2 percent of the population 65 or older.

Monthly benefits averaged \$874 for retired workers; \$820 for all widows and widowers (\$841 for nondisabled widows and widowers); \$815 for disabled workers; and \$430 for wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers. Average payments for children of deceased workers were \$570; for children of retired workers, \$414; and for children of disabled workers, \$239.

Monthly payments for December 2001 totaled \$36.5 billion. Of this amount, \$26.6 billion was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$5.2 billion to survivors; and \$4.7 billion to disabled workers and their dependents. Average benefits and total monthly payments include the 2.6 percent cost-of-living increase effective December 2001.

In **South Carolina**, benefits were paid to 703,930 persons. This number included 421,330 retired workers; 70,860 widows and widowers; 107,120 disabled workers; 32,540 wives and husbands; and 72,080 children. Social Security beneficiaries represented 17.3 percent of the total population of the state and 92.8 percent of the state's population aged 65 or older.

Retired workers in South Carolina received an average of \$844 per month; widows and widowers, \$740; disabled workers, \$803; and wives and husbands of retired and disabled workers, \$428. Average payments for children were: \$424 for children of retired workers; \$540 for children of deceased workers; and \$240 for children of disabled workers.

Monthly payments in December 2001 totaled \$537 million. Of this amount, \$372 million was paid to retired workers and their dependents; \$72 million to survivors; and \$94 million to disabled workers and their dependents.

## Supplemental Security Income Program

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal cash assistance program that provides monthly payments to low-income aged, blind, and disabled persons in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The program is based on nationally uniform eligibility standards and payment levels. The federal SSI payment is determined by the recipient's countable income, living arrangement, and marital status. As of January 2002, the maximum monthly federal SSI payment for an individual living in his or her own household and with no other countable income is \$545, and for a couple, \$817.

A state may supplement the payment levels of all or selected categories of recipients. These supplemental payments may be administered by the state or the Social Security Administration.

In December 2001, 6,688,489 persons received federally administered SSI payments including 1,264,463 aged, and 5,424,026 who were disabled or blind. A total of 1,995,159 recipients were aged 65 or older, 3,811,494 were 18 to 64, and 881,836 were under age 18.

The total number of persons receiving either a Social Security payment, a federally administered SSI payment, or both was 50,172,400. Federally administered payments totaled over \$2.8 billion in December 2001: \$2.5 billion in federal SSI payments, and \$302 million in state supplements. The average federally administered payment was \$394. The aged averaged \$314; disabled and blind, \$413.

In addition, 689,163 persons in 30 states received state-administered payments in December 2001, which totaled \$75 million.

In **South Carolina**, 106,881 persons—15,949 aged, and 90,932 disabled and blind—received federally administered SSI payments in December 2001. A total of 29,248 recipients were aged 65 or older, 60,410 between 18 and 64, and 17,223 under 18.

Federal SSI payments totaled \$39.3 million. The average federal payment was \$339 overall, \$177 for aged recipients, and \$367 for those disabled and blind. In addition, 3,483 persons in South Carolina received state-administered supplementation in December 2001, which totaled \$1.0 million.

In December 2001, the total number of persons in South Carolina receiving either a Social Security benefit, a federally administered SSI payment, or both was 766,348.

## **Social Security Earnings and Employment**

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 151.4 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Social Security (Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance or OASDI) program. They earned \$3.7 trillion in Social Security taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$464 billion in Social Security taxes to the OASI and DI Trust Funds.

In **South Carolina** in 1999, an estimated 2.17 million residents worked in employment covered under the Social Security program. They had \$48.11 billion in Social Security taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$5.97 billion in Social Security taxes.

## **Medicare Earnings and Employment**

Nationally, in 1999, the latest year for which state data are available, an estimated 154.7 million persons worked in employment that was covered under the Medicare (Hospital Insurance or HI) program. They earned \$4.6 trillion in Medicare taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$134 billion in Medicare taxes to the HI Trust Fund.

In **South Carolina** in 1999, an estimated 2.18 million residents worked in employment covered under the Medicare program. They had \$53.06 billion in Medicare taxable earnings. Employees, employers, and the self-employed paid a total of \$1.54 billion in Medicare taxes.



Angela Y. Harper was responsible for the programming, processing and compiling of data. For additional information pertaining to data in the factsheet, please contact Rona Blumenthal (410-965-0163) for Social Security data; Arthur Kahn for SSI program data (410-965-0186); and for information about earnings and employment, Greg Diez (410-965-0153). For technical information about the data processing, contact Angela Y. Harper (410-965-0106). For additional copies, contact the Division of Information Resources (202-358-6274) or check SSA's web site: <http://www.ssa.gov/policy>.